

Message Text

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FOR HODDING CARTER FROM S/PRESS

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TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT: TRAVELING PRESS REPORT, EVENING MAY 18

NO 40

1. WIRES

AP (SCHWEID) LEADS: "NEW AND POSSIBLY CRITICAL US/SOV
WEAPONS TALKS OPENED HERE TODAY WITH A 'FULL EXCHANGE OF
VIEWS' ON CONFLICTING APPROACHES BY THE TWO SUPERPOWERS
TO A TREATY TO LIMIT STRATEGIC ARMS." TODAY'S SESSION
SUGGESTED PROCESS OF COMPROMISE MAY HAVE BEGUN SALT
NEGOTIATIONS. SPOKESMAN CARTER QUOTED FROM PRESS BRIEFING
THAT THERE WAS 'GOOD FAITH ON BOTH SIDES' BUT NO PRO-
JECTION AT THIS POINT HOW LONG THE NEGOTIATIONS WILL GO ON."
SINCE MIDEAST DISCUSSIONS NOT YET BEGUN, VANCE/GROMYKO
MEETINGS COULD GO BEYOND 2-3 DAYS INITIALLY ANTICIPATED.

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UPI (ANDERSON) LEADS: "VANCE MET GROMYKO WEDNESDAY BEHIND
BARBED WIRE OF SOV MISSION TO TRY TO FIND SOME AGREEMENT
ON ARMS REDUCTIONS AND MIDEAST PEACE." US OFFICIALS
SAID VANCE PLANNED TO PROPOSE REGULAR US/SOV MEETINGS,
PROBABLY IN GENEVA, TO COORDINATE MIDEAST NEGOTIATIONS.

RE SALT, BOTH VANCE AND GROMYKO EXPRESSED CAUTION ON

THE LATEST ROUND OF TALKS, EXPECTED END FRIDAY. SPOKESMAN CARTER TERMED IT "A BUSINESSLIKE DISCUSSION ON STRATEGIC ARMS."

REUTERS (GUTMAN AND ROBERT EVANS) LEAD: "US AND SOVIET UNION SIGNALLED TONIGHT THEY HAVE FOUND A BASIS FOR SERIOUS DISCUSSION ON A NEW SALT AGREEMENT." SPOKESMAN CARTER, READING FROM JOINT STATEMENT DECLINED TO GIVE DETAILS OF VANCE/GROMYKO MEETING BUT "OBSERVERS SAID FACT THAT 2 OPENING SESSIONS OF TALKS WERE BEING DEVOTED TO SALT WAS CLEAR INDICATION BOTH SIDES FELT THERE WAS A CHANCE OF MOVEMENT."

"IN CONTRAST TO HIGH HOPES HE EXPRESSED BEFORE HIS MEETINGS IN MOSCOW 7 WEEKS AGO, VANCE APPEARED TO HAVE LOW EXPECTATIONS FOR ANY PROGRESS BEFORE TODAY'S TALKS BEGAN."

"IF THE TALKS HERE FOLLOW GLOOMY PROGNOSIS OF SOME WESTERN DIPLOMATS, THE TWO QUICKLY MAY CONCLUDE SALT DISCUSSIONS AND MOVE ON THE MIDEAST."

"VANCE PLANS TO SUGGEST THAT SOVS USE INFLUENCE WITH PLO TO RECOGNIZE EXISTENCE OF ISRAEL. HE WILL SAY QUESTION OF PLO REPRESENTATION IS MAIN STUMBLING BLOCK TO RECONVENING GENEVA CONFERENCE LATER THIS YEAR. IF REASONABLE FORMULA COULD BE FOUND FOR PLO RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL'S EXISTENCE, US WOULD BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS IT WITH ISRAELIS, OFFICIALS ADDED. VANCE'S PLANNED SUGGESTIONS APPEARED IN PART TO BE ATTEMPT TO PARRY UNCLASSIFIED

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EXPECTED SOV DEMAND THAT US PUT PRESSURE ON ISRAEL TO REACH A SETTLEMENT, DIPLOMATIC OBSERVERS SAID."

2. TV

NBC NIGHTLY NEWS

CHANCELLOR: IN GENEVA, MORE DISARMAMENT TALKS OPENED TODAY. THE US AND THE SOVIET UNION SIGNED AN AGREEMENT NEVER TO USE ANY WEAPONS THAT WOULD CAUSE TIDAL WAVES, EARTHQUAKES OR HURRICANES; AND WEAPONS LIKE THAT HAVE IN FACT BEEN CONSIDERED. BEYOND THAT, THE TWO COUNTRIES PICKED UP WHERE THEY LEFT OFF IN MOSCOW IN MARCH, LOOKING FOR WAYS TO REDUCE THEIR HUGE PILES OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

VALERIANI: VANCE ARRIVED ABOARD A COMMERCIAL FLIGHT. HE PAID HIS OWN WAY, AFTER HAVING SEEN HIS ONLY SON GRADUATE FROM YALE UNIVERSITY. IN A BRIEF AIRPORT NEWS CONFERENCE,

VANCE PROVIDED LITTLE CAUSE FOR OPTIMISM ABOUT HIS TALKS WITH SOV FM GROMYKO ON A NEW NUCLEAR ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENT.

VANCE: I DON'T KNOW WHETHER THERE WILL BE ANY PROGRESS. TIME WILL TELL.

Q: ARE YOU BRINGING ANY NEW IDEAS OR SUGGESTIONS ON THE SALT NEGOTIATIONS TO GENEVA?

VANCE: NO, WE ARE REALLY ONLY RESUMING DISCUSSIONS. ANYBODY ELSE GOT ANY QUESTIONS?

VALERIANI: VANCE AND GROMYKO JOINED 28 OTHER DIPLOMATS IN SIGNING A NEW INTERNATIONAL TREATY THAT SAYS, IN EFFECT, IT'S NOT NICE TO FOOL/WITH MOTHER NATURE AND WHICH PROHIBITS CHANGING THE ENVIRONMENT FOR MILITARY REASONS. FOR VANCE UNCLASSIFIED

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AND GROMYKO, THE EVENING CEREMONY WAS WINDOW-DRESSING. THEY CAME HERE TO TALK ABOUT LIMITING NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND THE MIDDLE EAST, BUT NEITHER SIDE WAS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT MAKING ANY PROGRESS.

ANOTHER SIGNING TOOK PLACE AT THE SOVIET EMBASSY--RENEWAL OF AN AGREEMENT ON SPACE COOPERATION, A KIND OF REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST, WHEN AMERICAN-SOVIET NEGOTIATIONS HAD GONE BETTER. THE AMERICANS WANTED TODAY'S TALKS TO BEGIN WITH THE MIDDLE EAST, BUT THE RUSSIANS INSISTED ON DISCUSSING ARMS CONTROL. THE MEETING LASTED 2 HOURS AND 20 MINUTES. THE ATMOSPHERE WAS DESCRIBED AS "BUSINESSLIKE," BUT NO INFORMATION WAS PROVIDED ON THE SUBSTANCE OF THE TALKS. THEY'LL CONTINUE TALKING ABOUT LIMITING NUCLEAR WEAPONS TOMORROW.

ABC NIGHTLY NEWS (REASONER)

SECSTATE VANCE IS IN GENEVA FOR TALKS WITH THE RUSSIANS ON ARMS LIMITATIONS AND THE MIDDLE EAST VANCE SAID WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE JUST WHAT THE ISRAELI ELECTION MEANS.

DUNSMORE: EVEN IN PRIVATE US OFFICIALS ARE BEING VERY CAREFUL NOT TO SAY ANYTHING WHICH COULD BE INTERPRETED AS INTERFERENCE IN THE ISRAEL ELECTION PROCESS. HOWEVER, THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE RESULTS OF THE ELECTION REPRESENT A SETBACK TO THE AMERICAN PEACE INITIATIVE. WHATEVER THE MAKEUP OF THE NEW COALITION, IT IS GOING TO BE DOMINATED BY THOSE WHO OPPOSE GIVING BACK TERRITORY TO THE ARABS. THE ONE OF THE THREE MAJOR POINTS WHICH THE CARTER

ADMINISTRATION HAD DEEMED ESSENTIAL TO ANY PEACE AGREEMENT IS SUBSTANTIAL ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL. EVEN BEFORE THE ELECTION IT WAS EVIDENT THAT THE OLD ISRAELI GOVERNMENT IS BECOMING VERY NERVOUS ABOUT PRESIDENT CARTER'S THOUGHTS
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ON WITHDRAWAL AND THE PALESTINIAN HOMELAND. IT IS A VIRTUAL CERTAINTY THAT THE NEW GOVERNMENT WILL BE HOSTILE TO SUCH IDEAS AND US-ISRAELI RELATIONS MAY BE IN FOR HARD TIMES AHEAD.

CBS EVENING NEWS

CRONKITE: VANCE AND GROMYKO RESUMED THOSE STALLED STRATEGIC ARMS TALKS IN GENEVA TODAY, BUT IT WAS THE ISRAELI ELECTION NOT SALT THAT WAS ON THEIR MINDS.

KALB: THE RESULTS OF THE ISRAELI ELECTIONS HAVE DISRUPTED AMERICAN PLANS FOR NEGOTIATING A PEACE SETTLEMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST. HIGH OFFICIALS MAY NOW HAVE TO DISCARD NOT ONLY THEIR TIMETABLE FOR RECONVENING THE GENEVA CONFERENCE BUT ALSO SOME OF THEIR BASIC ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT ISRAELI POLICIES. MOST IMPORTANT, THAT ISRAEL MIGHT BE WILLING TO GIVE UP CONTROL OF THE WEST BANK OF THE JORDAN AND THE GAZA STRIP IN EXCHANGE FOR GENUINE PEACE. VANCE, FROM THE MOMENT OF HIS ARRIVAL HERE THIS MORNING, REFUSED TO BE DRAWN INTO ANY SUSTANTIVE COMMENT. AS ONE OFFICIAL HERE PUT IT, WE WERE REALLY SHAKEN UP.

VANCE: I THINK WE'RE JUST GOING TO HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE WHEN THE SITUATION CLARIFIES ITSELF WHAT KIND OF A COALITION IS PUT TOGETHER IN ISRAEL AND I THINK IT'S PROBABLY NOT WISE TO SPECULATE UNTIL IT GETS A LITTLE CLEARER EXACTLY WHAT THE SITUATION IS.

KALB: IT WAS FOR THIS REASON AND OTHERS THAT VANCE AND GROMYKO STEERED CLEAR OF THE MIDDLE EAST WHEN BOTH DIPLOMATS MET AT THE SOVIET MISSION TO THE UN. MORE THAN 2 HOURS DEVOTED TO THE STRATEGIC ARMS NEGOTIATIONS, FROZEN SINCE LAST MARCH WHEN THE RUSSIANS REJECTED 2 AMERICAN PROPOSALS. TODAY VANCE AND GROMYKO HAD WHAT A SPOKESMAN CALLED A FULL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS. ATMOSPHERE DESCRIBED
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AS BUSINESSLIKE. NO REPORT ON PROGRESS, NO NEW PROPOSALS;

AGREEMENT ONLY TO MEET AGAIN TOMORROW. AS THOUGH TO
FIRE UP THE FLAME OF DETENTE IN A PERIOD OF EAST/WEST
COOLNESS, BOTH DIPLOMATS SIGNED ONE AGREEMENT TO CONTINUE
COOPERATION IN OUTER SPACE AND ANOTHER EARLIER IN THE
DAY AT THE OLD LEAGUE OF NATIONS TO BAR THE USE OF THE
ATMOSPHERE FOR HOSTILE PURPOSES.

BUT THERE WAS NO DOUBT THAT THE MIDDLE EAST DOMINATED
THEIR PRIVATE CONCERNS, EVEN AS THEIR PUBLIC ATTENTION
WAS ABSORBED WITH MARGINAL AGREEMENTS RELATED TO ARMS
CONTROL. BOTH VANCE AND GROMYKO REALIZED THAT AN UPROAR
OR EXPLOSION IN THE MIDDLE EAST COULD DRAW BOTH OF THEM
INTO A QUICK CONFRONTATION THAT NEITHER WANTS.

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